

CPYRGHT

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HELP WANTED: APPLY BOX 007, LANGLEY, VA. U.S. intelligence efforts are suffering from a "thriller" gap in the literary cold war. Great Britain has the most awesome arsenal so far, but the Soviets are moving fast to catch up. Whitehall built an early lead with Ian Fleming's breakthrough from journalism to James Bond, and maintains it with the subtle footwork of Len Deighton and John Le Carré. The Kremlin got a technological assist from Bulgaria when Andrei Gulyashki wrote From Russia--With Bond in which Bond is subdued by a young KGB agent, and a substantial morale boost with Petrovka 38. Two succeeding ploys moved the Soviets even closer to the UK: (1) a solution to the Great Train Robbery ("it was carried out by the British Secret Service to raise operating funds"); (2) the memoirs of Conon Molody, a real life Russian agent who operated in London as Gordon Lonsdale. Britain, mindful of U.S. aid to lessen its missile gap, is rushing the Penkovsky papers into print in both countries. Penkovsky was executed by Russia in 1963, but not before he passed quantities of Kremlin secrets to the West. The CIA and its minions still run a weak third, but Britisher Michael Kenyon gives them a backhanded boost in his recently published May You Die in Ireland. The only American dark horse is Donald Hamilton's cool assassin Matt Helm, who has not yet made hard covers.